

CLAIMS

1. A polypeptide consisting essentially of a sequence corresponding to residues 163 to 199 of DP-1, said sequence being:

KNIRR VY DAL N VLMAMNIIS KEKKE I KWIG LPTNSA (SEQ ID NO:1).

2. A polypeptide fragment of the polypeptide of claim 1 which is capable of antagonising the heterodimerization of a DP protein with an E2F protein.

3. A polypeptide according to claim 2 which is comprises the sequence NVLMAMNIIS (SEQ ID NO:2) or ALNV LAM (SEQ ID NO:7).

4. A polypeptide according to claim 3 which is selected from the group consisting of:

RRRV YD AL N VLMAMNIISK (SEQ ID NO:3);
NVLMAMNIIS KEKKE I KWIG (SEQ ID NO:4);
RVYD AL N VLMAMNIIS (SEQ ID NO:5); and
YD AL N VLMAMNIIS KEKKE I KWIG LPTNSA (SEQ ID NO:6).

5. A variant of a polypeptide as defined in any one of claims 1 to 4, said variant differing from the polypeptide by the presence of from 1 to 5 amino acid substitutions in the sequence of said polypeptide, said variant being capable of antagonising the heterodimerization of a DP protein with an E2F protein.

6. A variant according to claim 5 wherein the substitutions include substitutions selected from one or more residues corresponding to residues 167, 169, 171 and 175 of DP-1.

7. A polypeptide which comprises a first portion having the amino acid sequence of a polypeptide defined in any one of claims 1 to 6 and a second portion, attached to the N- or C-terminus of the first portion, which comprises a sequence of amino acid not naturally contiguous to the first portion in DP-1.

8. A polypeptide according to claim 7 wherein the second portion is membrane translocation sequence.

9. A polypeptide according to claim 8 wherein the membrane translocation sequence is derived from the *Drosophila melanogaster* antennapedia protein.

10. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a polypeptide according to any one of the preceding claims together with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier.

11. A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 10 which further comprises a cytostatic or cytotoxic agent.

12. A polypeptide according to any one of claims 1 to 9 or a composition according to claim 10 for use in a method of treatment of the human or animal body.

13. A method of inducing apoptosis in a cell which comprises introducing into said cell an effective amount of a polypeptide according to any one of claims 1 to 9.

14. A method according to claim 13 wherein said cell is a tumour cell.

15. A method according to claim 13 wherein said cell is a cardiovascular cell.

16. A product comprising a polypeptide as defined in any one of claims 1 to 9 and a cytostatic or cytotoxic agent as a combined preparation for separate or sequential use in a method of treatment of the human or animal body.

17. A surgical stent which comprises a polypeptide as defined in any one of claims 1 to 9 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

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18. An expression vector comprising a promoter operably linked to a sequence encoding a polypeptide as defined in any one of claims 1 to 9.
19. A host cell carrying a vector according to claim 18.

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